



San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco
London N. Breed
Mayor

Director's Report for Health Commission Meeting of September 20, 2022

A current overview of issues affecting the state of public health in San Francisco

<https://www.dph.org/dph/comupg/aboutdph/insideDept/dirRpts/default.asp>

Today, there are over 176,200 San Francisco residents with confirmed cases of COVID-19. And, sadly, a total of 1,027 San Franciscans have died. The San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) sends our condolences to their loved ones.

CELEBRATING THE NEWLY RENOVATED CASTRO-MISSION HEALTH CENTER

Mayor London N. Breed and City officials celebrated the opening of the newly renovated [Castro-Mission Health Center](#), the City's first neighborhood-based primary care clinic that has welcomed Castro and Mission communities for the past 57 years.

Castro-Mission Health Center patients can access primary care services such as routine checkups, podiatry, pharmacy consultation, women's health services, behavioral health services and HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment programs, as well as specialty services for LGBTQ+ youth. In addition, the City's Gender Health SF Program will move to the health center later this fall to provide increased access to quality gender-affirming health care for underserved transgender and non-binary people.

The capital improvements completed in July 2022 include 12 upgraded state-of-the-art exam rooms, four new consultation rooms, plus an interior remodel, seismic upgrades, fire protection upgrades and improved air conditioning. The exterior renovations include low-maintenance landscaping surrounding the facility.

The Castro-Mission Health Center at 3850 17th Street is part of an important legacy of community-driven health services that the city established in 1965 as part of the first public health center in San Francisco. The center, formerly known as Health Center 1, played an integral role in the early HIV/AIDS epidemic and continues to serve as the third-largest HIV treatment and care provider in San Francisco's primary care network. Operated by the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH), the Health Center continues to bring comprehensive health services to the Castro and Mission communities, and helps meet the increasing need for more integrated and holistic models of patient care.



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The \$14.8 million capital improvement project enhances and increases capacity of the facility. The Castro-Mission Health Center serves about 3,900 patients annually, mostly coming from the surrounding neighborhoods; more than half are long-term regular patients. Additionally, 51% of patients come from Latino communities and another 50% come from LGBTQ+ communities representing the deep historical roots in both neighborhoods.

It is one of three primary care clinics including Southeast Family Health Center and the Maxine Hall Health Center, in the San Francisco Health Network that have now been renovated or rebuilt as part of the 2016 Public Health and Safety Bond. San Francisco Public Works provided project management, construction management and design services for the renovation, and Build Group served as the general contractor. More than a quarter of the work was performed by contractors designated as small businesses.

The Castro-Mission Health Center renovation project is primarily funded by the Public Health and Safety Bond, largely passed by San Francisco voters in 2016. The \$350 million bond supports essential seismic and service delivery improvements to aging facilities that San Francisco relies on to protect the health and safety of residents, neighborhoods and businesses. The bond also funds capital improvements to Maxine Hall Health Center and Southeast Family Health Center, as well as clinic facilities at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital.

DPH RELEASES 2021 HIV EPIDEMIOLOGY ANNUAL REPORT

DPH released the 2021 HIV Epidemiology Annual Report that outlines San Francisco's progress towards San Francisco's goal of "Getting to Zero" new HIV infections, while highlighting the challenges faced by people who are experiencing homelessness and people who inject drugs.

The report shows that the number of new HIV diagnoses was 160 in 2021, a 16% increase from 2020. However, the number of new diagnoses is lower than the 173 reported in 2019. It is unclear whether the rise in diagnoses from 2020 is a result of an actual rise in transmission, or if more people accessed testing as the COVID-19 pandemic subsided and the lower number in 2020 was an underestimate of new infections in that year.

While HIV testing at medical sites improved and now exceed pre-pandemic levels, and linkage to care nearly matched pre-pandemic levels with 94% of people newly diagnosed with HIV entering care within one month, HIV testing at community sites is still lagging from 2019 levels. Also of concern, the proportion of new diagnoses among people experiencing homelessness has increased in the last decade to a high of 24% in 2021. The report reveals that those who were homeless and were diagnosed with HIV in 2020 were less likely than housed populations to have timely linkage to care



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and viral suppression. While new diagnoses have been declining over the past 10 years across all racial/ethnic groups, disparities remain, with HIV diagnosis rates in 2021 3.3 and 2.8 times higher among Black/African American and Latino men compared with white men, respectively.

The report also shows that overall deaths among people diagnosed with HIV have been increasing. While deaths due to HIV-related causes have continued to decline, for the first time, accidental deaths, which include drug overdoses, surpassed non-AIDS cancers as the second most frequent underlying cause of death in 2017-2020. The percentage of deaths due to drug overdoses among people diagnosed with HIV increased from 11.1% in 2009-2012 to 15.0% in 2017-2020. In response to the high rates of overdoses citywide, DPH is strengthening the continuum of services for people who use drugs with a comprehensive strategy that includes the widespread distribution of naloxone and harm reduction supplies, a street overdose response team, establishing drug sobering centers and other supportive spaces for people who use drugs, reducing stigma, and expanding access to low-threshold treatment.

To address increasing HIV diagnoses in populations experiencing disparities in the rate of HIV infections and care outcomes, DPH developed a framework called Health Access Points (HAPs). There are HAPs for seven priority populations, including people who use drugs (PWUD), Black/African Americans and Latinx persons. Our community partners leading the PWUD HAP are Positive Health Program Ward 86, Glide, St. James Infirmary, and Alliance Health Project. The goal of the HAPs is to provide equity-focused, stigma-free, and low barrier access to person-centered, comprehensive HIV, HCV, STI and substance use prevention and treatment services, as well as primary care, mental health services, and food and housing services. All seven of the funded HAPs also have an increased emphasis on harm reduction services and overdose prevention.

Project OPT-IN, a team of DPH staff and community partners, works to provide these services to PEH. Another DPH program, LINC'S (Linkage, Integration, Navigation and Comprehensive Services) ensures that all people newly diagnosed with HIV are linked to care rapidly and provides support to people experiencing homelessness and others who have fallen out of care. The LINC'S program has been instrumental in improving rates of linkage to care and viral load suppression in priority populations.

For more information about the 2021 HIV Epidemiology Report, read the full version here:

sfdph.org/dph/files/reports



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DPH PROVIDING FOOD SAFETY EDUCATION TO THE COMMUNITY

The Chinese Chamber of Commerce reached out to the Environmental Health Branch (EHB) to request an onsite Food Safety Presentation for the community. EHB provided the bilingual food safety presentation on August 31st, covering key food safety principles such as food temperatures, rapid cooling, vermin abatement, and sanitation. Public engagements like these are great opportunities to connect with the communities that we serve and educate small business owners and community organizations about food safety practices. In addition, it provided an opportunity for restaurant operators to have reinforced food safety education and training. This is just one small way that EHB builds trust and a partnership with the community. The training was well received by the restaurant owners who attended. One owner commented that they attended because “I want to professionally understand the food safety principles and bring it back to my staff so that they in turn can do a better job. During the pandemic, it is even more important to focus on food safety and sanitation.”

The training was also covered by the local media, Channel 26, KTSF, World Journal and Tsing Tao. The training was organized by EHB Food Program Manager, Nhi Tu and included Environmental Health Inspectors, Abel Simon, Christina Lee, Manny Barretto and Philips Ossai. Thank you to our staff for their contributions!

MPX UPDATE

LOCATION	TOTAL CASES AS OF 9/13/22 (probable and confirmed)
San Francisco	779
California	4,453
U.S.	23,117
Worldwide (83 Countries)	59,606

DPH is ensuring a robust, public health response to the MPX outbreak that aligns with our goals toward health equity and supports communities most affected by the virus. Vaccines are the best protection against MPX and one of the key strategies to lower the spread of the virus.

Since the onset of MPX, DPH has persistently advocated for more vaccines. As a result of these efforts, we were able to secure from the federal government a special allotment of 10,000 additional MPX doses to provide protection for people, including SF residents, who are attending upcoming community-based and large, public events associated with the Folsom Street Fair and Castro Street



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Fair.

The vaccines, which includes first and second doses of Jynneos, will be available to eligible event attendees at various pop-up vaccination sites, neighborhood vaccine clinics, the Folsom Street Fair and Castro Street Fair, and events at health system providers that will be posted on sf.gov/mpx and advertised through the community. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH), as well as a large network of healthcare providers (including clinics specializing in LGBTQI+ health), and the San Francisco Health Network are also providing additional resources to support expanded vaccine operations over the next several weeks.

This increase in vaccine allotment is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services *"Pilot Program for Additional Vaccine Allocation to State and Local Health Departments that Host Large LGBTQ+ Community Events,"* a federal pilot program to provide additional vaccines to states and cities holding events that convene large groups of LGBTQI+ individuals.

The health and safety of those attending these large events, and socializing and celebrating locally because of these events, is essential, which is why from September 18 to October 2, we are temporarily expanding eligibility for the Jynneos vaccine across San Francisco vaccine sites to also include eligible people who are visiting San Francisco from outside the Bay Area. Please visit sf.gov/information/mpx-vaccine for more information about vaccine eligibility.

DPH will continue to focus our resources and efforts on reaching communities who are inequitably impacted by MPX, especially BIPOC and Latinx communities. As part of these efforts, we are implementing a multi-prong community strategy for vaccinating communities that are highly impacted by MPX and may have barriers to healthcare. We will continue to seek out opportunities to leverage additional resources from state and federal partners to reduce disparities around MPX in BIPOC communities.

Our community strategy includes partnering with trusted community partners at various venues to reach those communities most highly at risk and supporting pop-up vaccine clinics at neighborhood events. This includes an upcoming event at Club Papi at Beaux Nightclub, 2344 Market Street from 8pm to 11pm on Wednesday, September 21st.



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DPH will continue to advocate for and stand with all communities who are disproportionately affected by MPX, and we will continue to notify the public about opportunities to access the vaccine in the weeks leading up to the Folsom Street Fair, the Castro Street Fair, and beyond.

COVID-19 UPDATE

As of September 7:

- San Francisco's 7-day rolling average of new COVID cases per day is 44 and 74 people are hospitalized, including 16 in the ICU.
- San Francisco's remaining ICU capacity is 29.8% and remaining non-ICU capacity is 20.1%.
- Eighty-five percent of all SF residents have been vaccinated and 75% have received booster dose(s).

[DPH in the News](#)